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Alert: Medi-Cal Expands Access to Adult Immunizations in Pharmacies

The Medi-Cal fee-for-service list of contract drugs now includes all Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)-recommended adult immunizations as a pharmacy benefit (see the [January 2016](#) and [September 2016 Medi-Cal Pharmacy Updates](#)). For further information about immunizations, see the [Recommended Immunization Schedules for Adults](#) Web page of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) subsequently released the [Adult Immunizations as a Pharmacy Benefit](#) letter, available on the DHCS website, requiring Medi-Cal managed care plans (MCPs) to also offer these adult immunizations on their pharmacy formulary. Currently, all Medi-Cal MCPs cover some, if not all, ACIP-recommended adult immunizations as a pharmacy benefit. In time, all Medi-Cal MCPs will cover all the immunizations as they update their formularies.

Additionally, Medi-Cal expanded their Presumptive Eligibility for Pregnant Women (PE4PW) program to offer a **full range** of influenza vaccine products (see the [July 2016 Medi-Cal Update](#)). Medi-Cal, including emergency-only and pregnancy-related services, also covers the provision of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria toxoids, and acellular pertussis) immunizations to pregnant women at in-network pharmacies. Pregnant women are recommended to receive Tdap at the **earliest opportunity** between 27 – 36 weeks gestation of every pregnancy, regardless of the mother's Tdap history, to maximize the transfer of maternal antibodies to protect the infant from whooping cough. (Refer to the [Vaccinating Pregnant Patients](#) Web page of the CDC website and the [Implement Prenatal Tdap Program to Prevent Infant Pertussis in California](#) document.) See the [Tdap and Influenza Immunization in Pregnant Women 2015 Maternal and Infant Health Assessment Survey](#) fact sheet for self-reported prenatal Tdap and flu vaccine rates listed by county and region. See also the [Prenatal Tdap Immunization Resources for Prenatal Care Providers](#) flyer for **free** educational materials that can be ordered to educate patients about the benefits of prenatal immunizations.

If in-network pharmacy providers are encountering any issues with Medi-Cal MCP or fee-for-service reimbursement of vaccines, consult the [Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plan Directory](#) available on the DHCS website or the Telephone Service Center (TSC) at 1-800-541-5555.

New pharmacy regulations require that pharmacists notify the primary care provider and prenatal care provider, if applicable and known, about immunizations administered to their patients and report immunizations administered into the state or regional immunization registry within 14 days of administration. For more information about the California Immunization Registry (CAIR), refer to the [CAIR](#) website. For more information about the pharmacy regulations, see the Board of Pharmacy [Order of Adoption](#) and [Mandatory Reporting of Pharmacy Vaccinations to CAIR](#) documents available on the California State Board of Pharmacy website.

Learn more about Medi-Cal eligibility on the [Medi-Cal Eligibility and Covered California – Frequently Asked Questions](#) Web page of the DHCS website.